

**WASHINGTON** - U.S. Rep. Harry E. Mitchell today wrote to the acting Under Secretary of for Memorial Affairs, Steve L. Muro, requesting an immediate audit of Arizona's National Cemeteries in light of the recent report of hundreds of graves at Arlington National Cemetery being misidentified, shoddy record keeping and improper burials.

"The report of misconduct at Arlington National Cemetery is a disgrace, and certainly no way to honor our nation's heroes or their families," said Mitchell. "We need to make sure that Arizona's National Cemeteries are operating appropriately and make sure that this never happens in Arizona."

An Army investigation of Arlington National Cemetery found "more than 100 unmarked graves, scores of grave sites with headstones that are not recorded on cemetery maps and at least four burial urns that had been unearthed and dumped in an area where excess grave dirt is kept." [

[The Washington Post](#), June 11, 2010]

Additionally, officials placed headstones in the mud along the banks of a creek for erosion control purposes. [ [The Washington Post](#), June 23, 2010]

"Honoring our fallen servicemen and women is one of the federal government's most sacred duties, and we must ensure that nothing like what happened in Arlington National Cemetery ever happens in Arizona," wrote Mitchell.

Below is the text of Mitchell's letter to Under Secretary Muro.

June 25, 2010

**VIA FACSIMILE**

Acting Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs Steve L. Muro

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

810 Vermont Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20420

Dear Under Secretary Muro,

As you know, an Army investigation recently revealed some horrible findings about maintenance of graves at Arlington National Cemetery. It found more than 200 graves at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) were misidentified or subject to improper record keeping.

According to the *Washington Post*, investigators found "more than 100 unmarked graves, scores of grave sites with headstones that are not recorded on cemetery maps and at least four burial urns that had been unearthed and dumped in an area where excess grave dirt is kept."

This is a disgrace and no way to honor our nation's heroes or their families.

To ensure that Arizona's National Cemeteries are operating appropriately, and do not have any of the problems that have been discovered at Arlington National Cemetery, I respectfully request an immediate audit of our state's national cemeteries.

Honoring our fallen servicemen and women is one of the federal government's most sacred duties, and we must ensure that nothing like what happened in Arlington National Cemetery ever happens in Arizona.

Sincerely,

Harry E. Mitchell

Member of Congress

###